

THE GREAT EMANCIPATOR

NO. 1440

A SERMON
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*“And you shall say unto Pharaoh, thus says the Lord, Israel is My son,
even My firstborn: and I say unto you, Let My son go, that he may serve Me.”
Exodus 4:22, 23.*

*“Then the Lord said unto Moses, Now shall you see what I will do to Pharaoh.”
Exodus 6:1.*

GOD had a people in Egypt. They were His own, the people of His choice. Although they had been grievously oppressed, and had sunk into humiliating slavery, His interest in their welfare had in no degree lessened. The Lord's purpose in sending Moses down into Egypt was that He might fetch out that people from among the nations to make them a separate people to Himself, that He might give them an inheritance, even the land which flowed with milk and honey and that they might dwell there as witnesses of His covenant and keep His testimonies. Now precisely what God was doing towards His people, Israel, in the land of Ham, He is doing towards His own chosen ones throughout the whole world. From one point of view the object of the gospel is to gather out from among the nations a people whom He did foreknow, whom He did predestinate, whom He has redeemed unto Himself to be His peculiar heritage. These are to be fetched out from among others, to be made a separated people, to be brought into a distinct position, and to have a distinct experience. “The people shall dwell alone; they shall not be reckoned among the nations” and they are ultimately to be brought to a prepared place, for which they are to be especially prepared that they may abide there, and that the Lord may verify the thing that He has predicted of them, “They shall be Mine in that day when I make up My jewels.” The work of rescuing perishing sinners out of the present evil world is as worthy of God as the work of delivering Israel out of Egypt. The same right hand of Jehovah, glorious in power, which released the sons of Jacob from the thralldom of Pharaoh, is now stretched out to ransom us from the dominion of Satan. The song of praise to Jesus Christ our Redeemer shall be more exultant than that which Miriam and the daughters of Israel lifted up by the Red Sea when they said, “Come let us sing unto the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously.” Indeed, we shall sing at the last, the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, clearly indicating that the redemption out of Egypt was always meant to be a leading type of the redemption of God's people from out of the midst of the world. For Christ has a people whom He has redeemed from among men, and there is a church of which it is written, “Christ loved His church and gave Himself for it.”

Now, in the process of bringing out these people of God from among the mass of mankind, God sometimes uses instrumentality, just as He did in the former case. He may employ an instrument that is apparently as little adapted for the work as Moses felt himself to be. Yet, the work is done, and to God, belongs the honor of accomplishing it. As for those of us whom He uses, we are more than content to yield the honor to Him. We rejoice in His excellence while we feel that we cannot take to ourselves any credit whatever, for we are less than nothing in His sight, and even in our own sight we are weak and worthless, so that unto God alone shall the glory redound when redemption's work is finished and complete.

I invite you to think, first of all, upon the *voice of God*. According to our text, it is, “Thus says the Lord, Israel is My son, even My firstborn: and I say unto you, Let My son go, that he may serve Me.” When we have dilated a little upon that, we shall need to have a few words upon the *voice of man*. This was to be the voice of man, “*You shall say* unto Pharaoh, Thus says the Lord.” What God had spoken was to be repeated by His servant, Moses. Then we shall close by noticing, in the third place, the *power*

which was to go with this voice of man. “I will be with your mouth and you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh.”

I. Let us endeavor, then, at the outset, to fix our thoughts upon THE VOICE OF GOD which was a real power to bring up His people out of Egypt. That voice was threefold—asserting His proprietorship in them, demanding their freedom and ordaining their destiny. *With imperial authority He claims the people as His own.* “Thus says the Lord, Israel is My son, even My firstborn.” The Lord knows them that are His and the Lord declared them to be His own with a jealousy of His inalienable right to their allegiance, and an assertion of His unfailing interest in their welfare. The children of Israel were, at that time, in a very sordid condition. They were up to their necks in clay, making bricks. They were a band of slaves, degraded, and brought down to the lowest condition. They were so spiritless that they submitted to any exaction of the tyrant and when the day of deliverance dawned on them, they could not think emancipation possible, or welcome the joyful change in their prospects. They had, as a nation, lost the very thought of liberty. It was trodden out. The people seemed as if they must lose their nationality or only retain it as a nation of slaves. Yet all begrimed and beslaved as they came to be, they were still beloved. The Lord loved them. He said, “Israel is My son, even My firstborn.” Surely Pharaoh might have said in his heart, “This is a fine son! What must the God be who says of these brick makers, this abject race, ‘This is My son’?” Yes, and these ill-conditioned, unkempt serfs, these debased men and women, He says of them—“Even My firstborn, My son and heir.” A man is naturally proud of his son and heir, yet there is the mighty God speaking after the language of mortal men, acknowledging these cheerless, crestfallen, despised and dispirited people and saying, “Israel is My son, even My firstborn,” acknowledging them too, in the teeth of proud Pharaoh, whose firstborn was saluted as a prince of the blood royal when he rode through the land, before whom every knee bowed and to whom as the son of the great king, homage was constantly rendered. “Israel is My son,” says God, “even My firstborn.” He is not ashamed of His people. He acknowledged His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and sin, just as He loved His people Israel when they were still in bondage and in degradation. “He loved my soul out of the pit,” said one of old. He loved us when we were lying in our blood, like an infant cast out unswaddled and unwashed. When no eye pitied us in the day of our nativity and we were cast out in the open field, He passed by and it was a time of love. And He said unto us, “Live.” Oh, wondrous grace of God, that He acknowledges His son when that son is still an Egyptian slave.

Moreover, God acknowledged His people when they did not acknowledge Him, for His name, “Jehovah,” was scarcely known to them. Although Moses presented himself to them with evident credentials, they were ready enough to reject him. We are informed in other parts of the Scripture that they had gone aside to false gods. During their sojourn in Egypt the Israelites fell into the prevailing superstition of the country, and they forsook the Lord. Some little light still lingered among them. Some traditions were treasured and transmitted from sire to son in solemn trust. Doubtless there was a remnant of pious souls, faithful to the God of Abraham. The bones of Joseph, preserved in Goshen as a memorial of the oath that he took of their tribes, subsequently were carried through all their devious wanderings in the wilderness and ultimately buried in Sechem, as you read in the last chapter of the book of Joshua, vouch for a fidelity we cannot wantonly forget. But the bulk of the people had fallen into the snares which surrounded them, and conformed to the fashions of those among whom their fortunes were cast, whose many gods and lords, were superstitiously served in secret. They were not a people who could have scraped together so much as a molehill of merit if they had tried. They were a vain and vicious people, prone to supplant, yet utterly supplanted. They were especially sinful because their marked proclivities which might have developed on the side of virtue were perverted into stains and stigmas on their reputation. Yet Jehovah says, “Israel is My son, even My firstborn.” And does the Lord acknowledge His people when they know Him not? Ah, blessed be His name, He does, or else they would never come to know Him. We love Him, now, because He first loved us and if there had not been that antecedent knowledge of us, and love towards us, we had not now been what we now are. Oh, the freeness and spontaneity of the grace of God, that He should know His people and call them His own, even when as yet they know Him not.

He acknowledged this people by affirming His covenant. “Israel is My son.” He was referring to the covenant which He had made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob of old. And the Lord knows His people and shows favor to them, not because of anything personal to recommend them, for there is no superiority in their nature, no brightness in their intellect, no beauty in their disposition that can be pleasing in His sight. The only title to grace in His eyes is that ancient covenant ordered in all things and sure which He has made, not with Abraham, but with our Lord Jesus, who stands as our covenant head. We do not sufficiently reflect upon the covenant as the great deep that lies under the fountain of many waters out of which all the wells of salvation continue to be filled with the living waters of grace—

*“Never had you felt the guilt of sin,
Or sweets of pardoning love,
Unless your worthless name had been
Enrolled to life above.”*

Unless you had an interest in that covenant which He made in the eternal council chamber long before the earth was most assuredly in hapless, hopeless, obscurity, you would have lived and died. This was the reason why He called Israel His son. An ancient covenant had made Israel to be so regarded. How sweet it is that He does not merely speak about the people as being His *people*, but He says, “Israel is My *son*.” There is a love between father and son which cannot be found elsewhere. Blood is thicker than water. Relationship has ties that cannot be relaxed. “Yes, but,” says one, “Does God ever call His people in any place, His sons before they are regenerate?” Well, there is a text that says, “Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, whereby you cry, Abba, Father.” It is because, in the purpose of God, His people are really His sons before they know anything at all about it, that in due time He sends the Spirit of His Son to give them the nature of children that they may enjoy the adoption of children and say, “Abba, Father.” O beloved, it is delightful to think that the Lord should look upon us before we are born—before we are born again—with a love that cannot be measured and cannot be broken.

The gist of this affirming was thus, “Israel is My son. You, Pharaoh, may call him your slave, but he is My child. He was Mine before he was yours. Israel is My son. You say, ‘No, he is my serf.’ I say, though he has fallen under your yoke, I will maintain My right to him as My firstborn. He is a prince and to that estate he shall be raised.” The Lord has a claim upon His people—a claim which all the claims of law and all the clamors of sin and death and hell shall never be able to deny. And though they basely submit to the claims of the wicked one and make a covenant with death and a league with hell, yet shall Jehovah’s claim upon them stand, for thus says the Lord, “Your league with death is broken and your covenant with hell is disannulled.” The Lord Jesus will not suffer those whom He has made to be His own people and ransomed by the bloody purchase upon the cross to remain the slaves of sin and Satan. They are His. His Father gave them to Him. They are His. He bought them. They are His. Their names are written on His hands and engraved on His side. They are His. He will not suffer so much as one of them to remain in bondage to the adversary. By thus acknowledging His people, He puts in a positive claim which puts all other claims on one side.

With the bare assertion of absolute right *He demands their unconditional freedom*. “Thus says the Lord, Israel is My son, even My firstborn: and I say unto you, let My son go.” What a grand verse that is! What an imperial edict it contains! As in the narrative of the Cosmos, God said, “Light be, and light was,” so in the history of the exodus, short words are launched with sovereign force—“Let My son go.” Well might the proud heart of Pharaoh have trembled before the Almighty, whose lips asserted a right which His arm was instantly able to enforce. How aptly those tones apply to our deliverance from under the law. The law includes all mankind under its curse. The god of this world claims the whole human race as his subjects. In due time, our Redeemer appears. The Lord Jesus comes, identifies Himself with the enslaved family, bears the curse, fulfils the law and then on the ground of simple justice demands for them full and perfect liberty, having fulfilled for them the precept and for them endured the penalty. “*Let My son go.*” On what pretext could the law, unless it was lawless and unjust, put in a claim which has been discharged, or urge a right which has already been fulfilled? No, from under the law the people of God go free and their joy is that they are not under the law from then on, but under grace. And how gloriously do those tones sound when they come with force and power to rescue us from the tyranny of

sin and Satan. The prince of the power of the air holds men in subjection. He prejudices them and so stops their ears against the gospel. He seals their eyes against the eternal light, but thus says the Lord, "Let My son go," and immediately the prejudice vanishes, the ear is opened, eternal truth shines into the heart, scales drop from the eyes and the soul beholds the heaven-born Light and begins to rejoice. Satan will tie a soul down sometimes, in very heavy bondage. I have known him fasten a soul down with steel chains of despair such as could not be snapped. The man has said, "There is no hope," and he has given up all thought of pardon and eternal life. But, "Thus says the Lord, let My son go." The iron bands have snapped in a moment, and the man has risen to hope and liberty, for the Lord's voice breaks the chains. Fast bound by fearful habits which seemed impossible to give up, having plunged into one sin after another, the man has been shut in by one iron gate and then by another and another, and was enclosed in the innermost ward of the prison. But at midnight he has been struck on the side when he was asleep in his senseless carelessness. Around him shone a great light. The covenant angel has come to him and led him through gate after gate. The iron gates have opened of their own accord, and the man has found himself free, and scarcely knew whether it was true or not. He knew not that it was true, but thought he saw a vision. The thing has been scarcely done before he has found himself to be alive and delivered from the bonds of sin, filled with astonishment at himself and saying, "How can this be?" His tongue has been filled with singing and his mouth with laughter, and he has said, "The Lord has done great things for me, of which I am glad."

Well, beloved, the tones of that august voice which said, "Let My son go" will continue to echo as long as you and I are here below. We shall continue to be let go. This glorious liberty shall be made more manifest to us daily. Are we not as creatures made subject to vanity and compassed with infirmity? By-and-by we shall be liberated from the bondage of the flesh. Our bodies shall go down into the grave and lie there for a while in the prison of the tomb, but that voice which quickened us into spiritual life will resuscitate our bodies and cause them to enter into the resurrection-life of Christ. Through the dark, dismal vaults will sound the loud, cheerful voice, "Let My son go," and there shall not a bone of a believer be left. As it was said of old, "not a hoof shall be left behind," so nothing that belongs to redeemed man shall be left either in hades or in the grave. "Of all that You have given Me I have lost nothing," says Christ, and truly, of person and of things—of all the people and of all that shall belong to the people to make up their manhood—there shall nothing be lost, but the Lord shall have His own and His grace shall triumph.

This voice of God is an acknowledgment of His people and a claim for their deliverance, but no less is it an *ordaining of their destiny*. "Let My son go, that he may serve Me." Oh yes, beloved, we are no sooner set free from serving Pharaoh than we begin to serve Jehovah. "Let My son go, that he may serve Me."

And in what capacity did Israel serve God? It was in the loftiest capacity possible. Israel became Jehovah's priest. It was in Israel that the sacrifice was offered. In Israel the incense was burnt. From Israel went up the sacred psalm. Israel stood before the Lord in that high position of sacred privilege. So, likewise, is it that as soon as a man is brought out of the bondage of sin, he presents unto the Lord the sacrifice of Christ by faith, and afterwards goes on to present himself a living sacrifice. Thus his thanksgivings and his broken and contrite heart are perpetual oblations and offerings of a sweet smelling savor, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

Israel became the servant of God by way of preserving the testimony. His were the oracles. Israel kept the knowledge of the one God. Israel kept the revelation of the Most High. While the entire world outside was dark, Israel preserved the light. To this end, in like manner, brethren, you and I are called of God. If He has brought us up out of the Egypt of sin, we are to present daily sacrifice. We are to bear daily testimony to the truth. And oh, if we do not, should we begin to stagger through unbelief, or speak with bated breath of the truth that has been surely made known to us, should the fear of man, or the fashion of the age so beguile our hearts, becloud our eyes, belie our good profession and utterly befool our common sense that we shall blush to bear our testimony—what shame must cover us, what confusion must take hold upon us. But, blessed be His name, He will keep His own true to His Word. If it were possible, the free-thinkers and the false teachers in these days would deceive the very elect, but that is

out of the question, it is beyond the range of possibility. All God's children shall be taught of the Lord and they shall hold His truth and bear witness to it, even to the world's end.

Israel was to be God's servant henceforth to serve Him by walking by faith. What a wonderful 40 years' walk that was in the wilderness. They did not live up to it. Still the spirit of that march of mystery was very wonderful. Without sowing or reaping they were fed, supplied with water without fountain, reservoir, or watercourse, guided without a compass and without one sign of path over shifting sand. Yet they were always well-fed, well-housed and what was still more marvelous, their camps were well shaded by day and well lit by night. They had a choice experience of having nothing and yet possessing everything. With no fertile fields or fruitful trees, yet Israel was made to live upon the fat of the kidneys of wheat and to ride upon the high places of the earth. She had all things and she abounded. The Lord was her shepherd and she did not want.

We are often called upon to serve God, and that very conspicuously, though we may be little conscious of it when we are required to walk by faith. This is the work of God, the grandest work a man can do—to believe on Him whom He has sent. The godlike work, the work of works is this, to walk by faith, living upon the unseen God.

Israel was to be God's servant by continually dwelling in happy fellowship with God, and waiting upon Him with holy worship. Nowhere else, in the entire world, was a passover or a feast of tabernacles kept to do Him homage, and nowhere else was this Sabbath hallowed and observed. With them alone Jehovah dwelt and among them Jehovah shone forth. And so, beloved, if you and I have been called out of bondage, it is that we may serve the Lord. Are we all alive to our obligation? Are we faithful to our higher calling? Are we doing our sworn, sacred duty? If anyone here is rescued this night from the grip of the destroyer, delivered from the bondage of this evil world, saved from the damning power of sin, know that when you leave one regiment, you must enlist into another regiment. You come in fresh from the enemy's camp, not to be treated as a prisoner, but as a recruit. You must enlist to assail the powers and passions you once defended. God would have you become His servant that you may serve Him with joy and gladness all your days.

Thus, then, I have opened up the voice of God, as far as my time or strength or knowledge has permitted.

II. Now, secondly, here was THE VOICE OF MAN. What a comedown it seems to be. "*You* shall say unto Pharaoh, Thus says the Lord, Let My son go." Why did not the Lord say it Himself? Why did He need to pick up a Moses and send him to say it? Well, dear friends, had the Lord said it Himself to Pharaoh, it would have been very startling and Pharaoh must have yielded ultimately to the divine decree. But don't you see the deeper marvel in the milder proceeding, when Jehovah, as it were, hides His power and cloaks it in weakness? Instead of appealing to Pharaoh with that voice which breaks the cedars of Lebanon, and makes the hinds to calve, He speaks to him by one who was slow of speech and of a stammering tongue.

Now, if God's voice can vanquish Pharaoh when it masks itself behind the feebleness of a stuttering, stammering Moses, it will be more glorious than it would have been if it had used no instrumentality whatever. Why does not the Lord speak to every sinner directly, and bring him out and save him? Well, He might do so. He might do it if He would, but when He condescends instead, to take us poor mortals who have tasted of His love and says to us, "Now you go and be My voice: you go and speak for Me," oh, then His grace and power are not less conspicuous, but they are far more admirable! In using such ill-adapted tools for the accomplishment of His great designs, He shows His own transcendent power. That famous well-cover at Antwerp, just opposite the cathedral—one of the finest pieces of worked iron that was ever known—is said to have been made by Quintyn Matsys with nothing but a hammer and a file, his fellow workmen having taken away his tools. If it is so, the more praise is due to his consummate skill. All the works of God overflow to His glory. But when the tools He uses appear to be totally inadequate to the results He achieves, our reverence is excited, while our reason is abashed, and we marvel at a power we cannot understand. This comes home to some of us very closely. Let us put it to ourselves. Does the Lord take you, my brother, or has He taken me, and does He speak words of eternal power through our poor little tongues—through these unruly members, that are prone to do so much

mischievous? If He really wins souls through them, or pulls down the pride of Pharaoh through them, then shall it ring through eternity that the Lord has done marvelous things. He has taken the worm and made him to be a sharp thrashing instrument, having teeth, and made him to thrash the mountains. He has chosen the weak things of the world to confuse the things which are mighty. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings He has ordained strength, because of His enemies, that He might still the enemy and the avenger. Unto His name be glory forever and ever.

The feebleness of the human voice has never appeared more tangible than when it has attempted to repeat the sentences which have been uttered by the mouth of the Lord. Moses seems to think that there must be some mistake. Can it be that God means to bring Israel out of Egypt by him? Whenever God designs to make His servants eminently useful, He lets them know their frailty. The more treasure there is in the vessel, the less will its comeliness be vaunted. It is mere common ware, an earthen vessel that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. But when Moses found that he really was employed of God how fearless he was of ridicule. He went in unto Pharaoh and delivered his Master's message. The interview with Moses and Aaron must have seemed supremely ridiculous to Pharaoh. It put him into a great rage. These two Israelites, wretched slaves, coming to tell the great king of Egypt that he must let Israel go, how absurd! Even to the Israelites it must have appeared preposterous, for two persons such as these to go in before the king. Why, with a word he could have said, "Take off the dogs' heads," and so have ended all the business directly. Yet they went and faced him in his royal palace and delivered what he might think a vain menace, but what they knew to be a veritable message from God.

Insignificant as we, of ourselves may be, the very fact that God instructs us to speak might suffice to quell our fears. We must go and speak the Lord's message and must not be afraid of being thought infatuated. When I have sometimes bid a sinner live and believe in Christ, I have heard a mutter, "What is the good of telling a dead man to live?" Some wise brother has said, "You might as well shake a pocket handkerchief over a grave." Yes, brother, it is true—quite true. So might Moses as well have shaken a pocket handkerchief outside Pharaoh's palace, but, when God bid him to go and tell Pharaoh to let His people go, he went and did it. And when the Lord bids any of us go to a sinner and say, "Believe," we cannot make the sinner believe, neither can he make himself believe, but the preacher sent of God is an echo of God's voice. God speaks through him. With authority he is commissioned to say to the sinner, "Turn you, turn you; why will you die? Repent and be baptized, every one of you." We are bid to speak peremptorily, as ambassadors of the King. Not because of any prerogative we assume, but as we commend ourselves to every man's conscience, there is power in our message. The voice that speaks by stammering Moses is divine, notwithstanding the ridicule that may be heaped upon it.

Moses, having such a command to go and speak, must be undeterred by refusal. "I know not the Lord," said Pharaoh, "neither will I let His people go." Now, dear brother, you cannot win souls unless you are prepared to meet with strong rebuffs. Yes, but some are heartbroken if any resistance is offered them. You may expect it. Old human nature does not know the Lord. You remember how Melancthon thought he was going to convert any number of people when he began to preach, but when he found out his mistake, he said, "Old Adam is too strong for young Melancthon." So he is. You will come across a bit of grit every now and then which will break your knife. Be not dismayed, the Lord will sharpen you and make you stronger and stronger yet, for even that Pharaoh who said, "I will not let the people go," will be down on his knees presently begging the people to depart. We must be prepared for opposition, and neither flinch nor tremble, but brace ourselves up for the struggle.

So, too, the man whom God sends ought to be assured of success. I am persuaded that Moses, after he got over his first little difficulties with the people and recovered from his own diffidence, parleyed not with doubt, but was strong in faith. There he stood with the wondrous rod, turning waters into blood and slaying all their fish, covering the heavens with blackness, turning the dust into living creatures, bringing hail and grievous plague, and doing it all as calmly and quietly as he should do who feels that he is the voice of God. How steadily he kept at his work! With what diligence he persevered in it, till at last the 10th plague found Moses unmoved, ready to conduct the people away to the Red Sea and to bring them out into the wilderness! O servants of God, be calm and confident. Go on preaching the gospel. Go on teaching in the Sunday school. Go on giving away tracts. Go on with steady perseverance. Be

sure of this, you shall not labor in vain or spend your strength for nothing. Do you still stutter? Are you still slow of speech? Nevertheless, go on. Have you been rebuked and rebuffed? Have you had little else but defeat? This is the way to success. You shall pave the road with the rough flints of your failure. Toil on and believe on. Be steadfast in your confidence, for with a high hand and an outstretched arm the Lord will fetch out His elect, and He will fetch some of them out by you. Only trust in the Lord and hold on the even tenor of your way.

III. Our last word is upon THE POWER OF GOD. Without the power of God the voice of man would have been an utter failure.

What effect was produced by the voice of Moses? Went there not forth with it a power which plagued Pharaoh? It filled the sinful land of Egypt with plagues. So men that preach God's gospel with God's power fill the world with plagues. "I know that," a man says. "I wish I had never listened to that fellow. I could not sleep last night." No, the frogs were his bedchamber. The true preacher finds his hearer sometimes saying, "I will never go again. Wherever I am, I seem to be haunted and tormented with the truth that man has spoken so badly and so boldly. The commands he enforces run counter to the prejudices I cherish. They alarm my conscience and worry me incessantly." Yes, he has made a simple sermon bring forth all manner of flies—thoughts that will sting a man wherever he goes and he cannot escape from them! He still kicks and strives against the gospel—rebels against it, won't have it—gets angry, goes to the theater one night, joins in a little social revelry another night, but to no purpose. He does not enjoy anything. He scarcely knows why. Soon a thick darkness comes over the whole scene of life, as the darkness came over all the land of Egypt. All that was beautiful and brilliant is now obscured. All that was pleasant and joyous is now eclipsed. The man finds that he does not even enjoy the ordinary comforts of life. He does not know why. He does not intend to yield to the gospel, yet his very bread seems sour and the water he draws from the well is brackish and bitter. His troubles multiply and follow one another in quick succession. Now a hail storm that leaves desolation behind; then a grievous disease among the cattle, the hand of the Lord is not confined to the farm. It will visit your home. His terrible judgment reaches your family, your fondest love, your firstborn son. As of old, there was a cry going up in the land of Egypt, so that it was intolerable to stay there, so God lays bare His arm in the exceedingly great plagues which His terrible law brings upon a man. When He means to fetch him out and bring him to Himself, God's servants become the harbingers of plagues. Jesus Himself said, "I came not to send peace on the earth, but a sword." That sword is unsheathed and families are divided against each other, with the grand intent that Israel should be brought out and peace established by the redemption which Jehovah has provided.

What will occur, by-and-by? Why, the oppressor will be glad to part with his bondmen. It sometimes happens that the ungodly become very glad to get rid of God's chosen people, whom they are prone to persecute. "Their melancholy ill agrees with our liveliness," so they say. They did all they could to invite them to their parties and get them into their frivolities again, they laid traps for them to keep them away from hearing the gospel, but now the Lord has begun to deal with them. Their old companions say, "Now we must leave him." "I have tried all I could to get our old comrade back to our old parties," says one, "but really, he said such things that he quite poisoned all our pleasures. We could not enjoy ourselves. I say, let us get rid of him. Do not let him be in our company any more." Yes, it is a grand thing—when the preaching of the gospel makes the ungodly want to keep the converts away from their cliques—when they say, "Oh, go off to the Tabernacle. We do not want you here. You have pestered us enough with your religion, and your prayers, and your crying, and your tears, and your talk about being lost, and your needing to find a Savior. You are bad company and you had better be gone." A lady, who joined this church some years ago, moving in the higher circles of society, said to me, "I was quite willing to continue my acquaintance with my friends, but I found they gave me the cold shoulder and did not want me." Just so. It is a great mercy when the Egyptians say, "Get you gone," and when they are ready to give you jewels of silver and jewels of gold to get rid of you. The Lord wants His people to come right out and to be separate. He knows how, by the simple utterance of the gospel, to put such a division between His people, and those who are not His people, that even the ungodly shall begin to say, "Get

you gone. We want to have nothing further to do with you.” Glory be to God when such a thing as that happens.

And the Lord knows how to make all opposition cease, for it is written that when Israel came out of Egypt, not so much as a dog moved his tongue against the children of Israel. Before, they were such slaves that if a cur barked at them they dared not turn against it, for fear it should be the dog of an Egyptian, who would be surely down upon them for meddling with his dog. How dare a slave do that? Everybody was against them. But when the Lord brought them out, there was not a dog that dared bark that night. The Egyptians were all anxious that they should be gone, and willing that they should go. And Pharaoh, too, must have astonished his subjects with his sudden zeal to see this strange people gone.

Do you know what that means? Oh, what fights and battles; what wars and strife there were in my soul when I was trying to find Christ! My old sins came up against me, my memory unearthed buried trespasses, faults and failings gathered in force like a flood, and threatened to overwhelm me. Everything in my constant studies and in my daily experiences seemed to drive me back from Christ. But on that memorable Sabbath morning when I heard the word, “Look unto Me, and be you saved, all the ends of the earth,” I did look and lo, against me not a dog did move his tongue. My sins did not complain. They were drowned in the Red Sea of Jesus’ blood. My old corruptions—I did not know at the time that I had any, they were so very quiet. Temptations ceased to trouble me. For that little while at any rate, the warrior seemed to sheathe his sword and the brick maker laid down his clay to go out of Egypt with jewels of silver and jewels of gold. I could sing unto the Lord, for He had triumphed gloriously. I have met some of these old Egyptians since then, a good number of them, and I have had some hard dealings with them. But, at that time, all was still and quiet, happy and blessed—

*“Happy day, happy day,
When Jesus washed my sins away!”*

With the paschal lamb in our mouths nobody dares to challenge us. The blood on the door is an unanswerable answer to every accuser, quibbler, or adversary.

Glory be to God, then, who thus can fetch out His people and deliver them from their sins, their lusts, their habits, their passions—deliver them from death—deliver them from going down into the pit and so deliver them that none shall lay anything to their charge, since God has justified them and Christ has absolved them. May the Lord grant us grace to be used as His instruments as Moses was. And may we, each one of us, cry unto the Lord if we are in bondage, just as Israel did in Egypt. The Lord in mercy, send forth concerning every poor sinner here just such a message as He sent concerning His people in the house of bondage. “Thus says the Lord, Let My son go, that he may serve Me.” If He will thus work among us as in the olden times, to Him shall be the glory now at this present, yes, and forevermore. Amen.

**PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—EXODUS 4:10-17, 21-23, 5:1-9,
15-23, 6:1-8**

HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—440, 220, 219.

Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software.

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